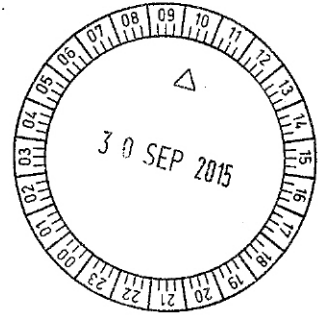


Monday 28th September 2015



Hon Rick Mazza MLC
Select Committee into the Operations of RSPCA WA
Parliament House
Perth, WA

Matthew & Ina Carrick
Greenough Equine Veterinary Centre
Greenough WA

Dear Mr Mazza and Members of the Committee,

We would like to take the opportunity to present supplementary information to our interview by the Select Committee on 14th September 2015.

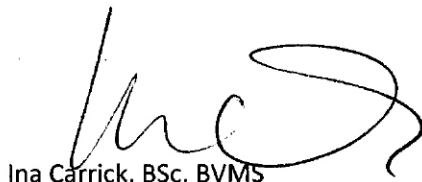
There appeared to be some general confusion about the timeline of events, which led to Hon Lynn MacLaren questioning as to why we did not just talk to Inspector Rogers about the contingency plan that we had in place at her first visit to our property on 25th February 2015. Matt tried to clarify this point however, due to the time constraints, we could not expand on this as much as we would have liked. Furthermore there was a question posed by Hon Sally Talbot as to why we followed the legal advice we were given of destocking the property despite having shelter available for the horses. This was then followed by questions in regards to the sufficiency of shade on our property. We would like to expand on our answer to that question as well as we are concerned that there were a few misunderstandings in regards to those issues.

We would be grateful if the committee would please consider this information as part of evidence given.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Regards


Matt Carrick, BSc, BVMS


Ina Carrick, BSc, BVMS

Supplementary Information

1. We would like to clarify that we have an agreement with the RSPCA that the infrastructure and contingency plans we had in place, all of the time, preceding any visit from the RSPCA was adequate to ensure the health, welfare and safety of horses on our property.

As requested by the RSPCA at our mediation meeting on 29th January 2015, we supplied a written version of our contingency plans (Attachment 1). When drafting this document an unfinalised, unsigned copy was accidentally sent to the RSPCA and the office of The Hon Paul Brown MLA. A follow up email was sent to explain this and that the email is to be disregarded. (Attachment 2) It appeared that this, wrongly sent, email was referred to in our interview. The document in attachment 1 is the correct document and was emailed to the RSPCA on Friday 22nd May 2015 (Attachment 3).

We ask you to please refer to Attachment 1 for description of our infrastructure and contingency plans.

2. There were some questions being asked by Hon Lynn MacLaren as to why we did not provide the information of our plans freely to the RSPCA and we would like to elaborate on that answer.

When Inspector Maureen Rogers visited our property on 25 February 2015 the following conversation took place:

Inspector Rogers enters our premises and asks if I (Matt Carrick) had intention to erect shelter in the paddock where the mares were located. I said No. She asked if I had intention to plant trees in that paddock. I said No. Her next comment was that all I had to say was that I had the intention to plant some trees or put up a shelter and all this would go away. Although a somewhat tempting offer I told her that I could not put my hand on my heart and tell her that I had that intention. **I was not being recalcitrant just honest.**

Inspector Rogers then gave me an excerpt from the Animal Welfare Act 2002 stating that I needed to provide food water and shelter in order to ensure the animals' health, safety and welfare. I then asked to be provided with the RSPCAS official legal interpretation of this section of the Act in writing via email. I asked if the RSPCA could please specify under what conditions they felt shelter had to be provided so that horses' health safety and welfare were not compromised. Also if shelter had to be provided under certain circumstances, what specifications would constitute acceptable shelter so I would be aware of how to comply with the Act.

I was asking for communication not refusing it.

I specifically asked for information to be provided via email because this is the most prudent way of communicating efficiently in official matters.

Inspector Rogers then tried to get me to sign a direction notice. I advised her that I will not sign any documents unless I get, in writing, further clarification, as requested via email. I would never sign an

official document that could potentially lead to my imprisonment without further documents in writing as well as advice from a lawyer.

I thought that once provided with clarification of the RSPCA'S position, I could then explain how I thought we were complying.

The questions we sought to clarify were as follows

- Is free access to shelter required 24/7, 365 days of the year in order to ensure livestock's health welfare and safety?
Surely being in a paddock with good feed, water and fencing, but no free access to shelter, on a 25 °C Spring day would not constitute a breach of the act?
What about at night time?
- if not required 24/7, 365 days of the year, under what conditions did the RSPCA feel that it became necessary?
 - I. At what times of the day, and does this change from month to month?
 - II. Under what conditions of Temperature, humidity and windspeed?
 - III. If the above two points are too prescriptive to be able to give answers, does it then just become a judgment call for the person in charge of the animals?
 - IV. How do you assess levels of acclimatisation?
 - V. How long without free access to shelter would constitute an offence? 10minutes, an hour, a day, week, a month, more?
 - VI. If I was outside working in the sun on the same day, doing very physical work and I was coping fine, would it be reasonable to ascertain that a horse that was not doing any work at all, just standing in the paddock, would not have its health welfare or safety compromised?
 - VII. There is no animal welfare standards and guidelines or codes of practice for horses, however there is for cattle and horses have far better thermoregulatory mechanisms than cattle. This being so then surely those standards and guidelines for cattle would more than suffice any horse requirement. That is unless horses are deemed "more worthy" and a speciesest approach is taken.
- If questions relating to the need for shelter are answered then what are the specifications required in order to comply?
 - I. How many square meters of shade are required/head?
 - II. What materials are acceptable, would shade cloth suffice?
 - III. Are walls required

At the time of the first communication with Inspector Rogers we did not want to make any verbal statements about our plans as we sought clarifications on all of the above.

Furthermore, I (Matt Carrick) was reluctant to make any comments as I was unclear in what capacity Inspector Rogers was conducting her visit. As mentioned previously, it would have been highly unusual for us as a veterinary practice to engage in further discussions with Inspector Rogers without receiving documents in writing. We then, would have replied in writing which is the usual process official accusations that could potentially lead to prosecution are handled.

3. Further information in regards to Hon Sally Talbot's question as to why we followed the legal advice given to us. We decided to follow this advice and destock our property as even after receiving the direction notices we still did not know what was asked of us in detail. Directions given by the RSPCA need to be clear and achievable. Just writing the word "shelter" is not clear especially given Inspector Rogers' questioning in her initial visit. We needed clarification to the above questions otherwise not us or anyone else is able to comply. We are still unable to answer questions as to the sufficiency of shade on our property as the RSPCA still has not made clear what is asked of us in terms of shelter.

4. In regards to our answer as to why shelter is not needed for horses in the Midwest.

We would like to clarify our thoughts on the requirement of horses for shelter. We are not and have never been of the opinion that horses never require shelter. The environment in the Midwest is unique due to its high wind currents, which facilitate the horses' cooling physiology greatly. Hence the need for shelter is not absolute.

We know, as does every other veterinarian that deals with horses, that horses possess physiological traits that give them extremely good thermoregulatory control, allowing them to cope very well with the extremes of temperature and exercise even more so when they are locally adapted. For many reasons it may not be possible, necessary or even counter-productive at various times for horse owners to provide free access to shelter 24/7. However access to shelter should be made available if horses are showing physical signs of heat distress, such as elevated perspiration or respiration (mainly at horse events for example). This is our ethos and our plan, which was accepted by the RSPCA, reflects this.

END OF SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION



- Production, Health and Fertility Services
- Veterinary Equipment and Product Supplies

Dr Matt Carrick
BSc., BVMS

BOS Veterinary Services
PO Box 612, Dongara WA 6525

Phone: 08 99261331
Fax: 08 99261334

ABN: 13 112 888 730

Friday 22nd of May 2015

To whom it may concern,

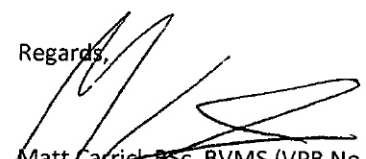
As discussed and acknowledged in our meeting on Friday 30th January 2015 at the premises of BOS Veterinary Services the following information is being provided.

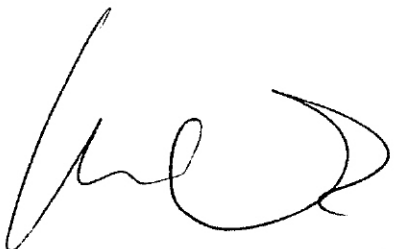
We, Matt and Ina Carrick do have and have always had in place plans and the infrastructure to provide the horses in our care with the level of shelter required, in order that their health and welfare were and are not adversely affected.

Horses on our property are checked at a minimum daily and if weather conditions are more extreme then several times a day. As Veterinarians we are able to use our high level of skills to assess the condition of the horses in our care. If a horse was showing any signs of stress related to heat exposure, we would move them to paddocks that contain trees and if necessary, we have several mobile irrigation systems (that each cover 20 x 100m) that we can use.

For example on hot days, in the past, when we felt like we were not going to be able monitor them to the level required, they were moved to paddocks with trees and or the sprinkler system deployed.

Regards,


Matt Carrick BSc, BVMS (VPB No 1914)


Ina Carrick BSc, BVMS (VPB No 2162)

Bos Veterinary Services

From: Bos Veterinary Services
Sent: Thursday, 23 April 2015 5:12 PM
To:
Cc: Colliver, Natasha (Natasha.Colliver@mp.wa.gov.au)
Subject: Please ignore previous email

Hi guys,

My apologies please ignore the previous email sent at 12:12pm today. Matt was meant to add some other pointers to it but it was accidentally emailed off instead.

My apologies again about this mistake.

Cheers

Ina



PH: (08) 9926 1331

From: Bos Veterinary Services
Sent: Friday, 22 May 2015 2:29 PM
To:
Cc: Colliver, Natasha
Subject: Letter

Hi Amanda and Natasha

Please see attached the finalised letter as requested by the RSPCA in our meeting on Friday 30th January 2015.

Amanda, as also discussed in our meeting, it would be appreciated if we could receive the written confirmation that the direction notices nos 1405 and 1404 issued by yourself on 17th March 2014 have been revoked.

Thank you very much in advance and my apologies in the delay of getting this letter to you.

Warm Regards

Dr Matt Carrick
Bsc, BVMS
Director/ Veterinarian BOS Vet & Rural



PH: (08) 9926 1331